

February 21, 2000

Mr. Rafael Ramirez
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
The Portals Building, Room 6250
Washington, DC 20202-5249

Dear Mr. Ramirez:

This letter shall serve to designate the Board of Trustees of the Mississippi Institutions of Higher Learning (IHL) as the state education agency eligible to apply for the Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) State Grant. IHL seeks to foster greater awareness of higher education opportunities and has a vested interest in ensuring that students come to college prepared for success.

The GEAR UP State Grant application shall seek to enhance and expand successful programs, while strengthening connections between Mississippi education agencies, community-based organizations and business partners. Its goal is to prepare students, starting in middle school, for college admittance and a successful higher education experience.

If you have any questions concerning Mississippi's GEAR UP State Grant application, please feel free to contact Dr. Thomas Layzell, Commissioner of Higher Education, (601)982-6623.

Very truly yours,

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RM:klr

cc: Dr. Thomas Layzell
Dr. Olon Ray
Dr. Richard Thompson

